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THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Though they have no legal qualifications, still in the light of experience they have been able to carry on their duties quite satisfactorily."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know, Sir, whether the Government have waived the qualifications in respect of these officers or whether the appointing authorities themselves have waived them? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" I don't know, Sir; the Government must call for the information and must set right, if they are irregular."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Sir, in Madura, where there are a number of competent lawyers available, where is the necessity to prefer police officers? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" The District Magistrate must have thought that in cases like these, the police officers would prove more efficient than Assistant Public Prosecutors."

SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" May I invite the attention of the Hon. Minister that a Graduate in Law is a necessary qualification for such posts? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Yes, Sir, but in some cases there were exceptions."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" What is the need for exemption in a district like Madura where there are a number of lawyers? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" I will investigate that matter, Sir."

SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" Should not any attempt be made to invite applications from lawyers before filling these posts by police officers? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" If it is with regard to Madura, I say again I shall investigate it."

Digging pits by the roadside.

* 85 *Q.*—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO: Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the practice of digging pits, sometimes deep, by the roadside for removing earth required for road-making or road repairs has become widespread;

(*b*) whether in the rainy seasons water stagnates in these pits;

(*c*) whether these pits form ideal farms for mosquito breeding;

(*d*) whether malaria prevails in most of the villages by the roadside on account of the objectionable practice referred to in (*a*);

(*e*) whether the Government have at any time considered the desirability of putting a stop to the practice in the interests of public health;

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(f) whether the Government propose to take any steps to ensure that pits are not dug in the above manner;

(g) whether the railway companies also resort to similar practice for removing earth to strengthen the track;

(h) what steps are being taken to prevent the railway companies from digging such pits; and

(i) whether the Government propose to examine the whole question anew?

THE HON. SRI K. R. KARANTH :—" (a) Burrow pits are often made in removing gravel and earth required for road-making or road repairs.

" (b) Water is likely to stagnate in these pits during the rainy season.

" (c) Stagnant collections of clear water in these pits may serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

" (d) Such stagnation may cause malaria but there is no information as to whether and to what extent malaria prevails in roadside villages solely as a result of the practice referred to.

" (e) Yes.

" (f) In the interest of road-making and road repairs it is not practicable to prohibit absolutely the removal of gravel and earth from roadside land. Local officers have been instructed to empty the pits as far as possible by cutting drains, but it is not always possible to drain pits effectively. Adequate steps will be taken to drain the pits as far as possible where they have necessarily to be dug on roadside lands.

" (g) Yes, except in the limits of towns where the earth is brought in ballast trains.

" (h) Such burrow pits are made by the Railway Administration in exercise of the powers vested in them under section 7 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890. In doing so the Railway Administrations avoid any action which is likely to prejudice public health. When the ground is falling or rising burrow pits are connected so as to drain away water to the nearest culvert or waterway. Local bodies can take action under section 123 of the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920, and section 224 of the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920, to enforce the obligation of the Railway authorities to prevent a pit from becoming a source of danger to the health of the neighbourhood. The Railway Authorities have also reported that they are prepared to extend their co-operation in this matter. No other steps are proposed to be taken.

" (i) No, in view of the answer to clauses (f) and (h).

" I may add to the written answer with reference to clause (f) that instructions have been issued to see that in regard to towns, and villages in panchayat areas, as far as possible, these pits are not made, as they are likely to prove a source of nuisance and trouble to the public."